

CHARIVARIA.

THE anniversary of the Turkish SULTAN's accession was observed last week in Constantinople with more than usual display, but the arrangements to view the Italian fleet unfortunately fell through.

"On Saturday," writes a correspondent to *The Evening News*, "my son caught an orange-tip butterfly in the garden in front of my house. Surely this is an unusual occurrence in April?" The person best qualified to answer this question is surely the son?

In consequence of a Paris chauffeur having had his cab stolen from him, in future these vehicles will be fastened to the drivers by means of a stout chain.

We merely give the rumour for what it is worth; but it is said that at the French Sidney Street affair the police could have rushed their men long before they did, only the cinematograph operators objected, wishing to make a really good thing of it.

"Who framed the Home Rule Bill?" asks a correspondent. We cannot bring ourselves to divulge the secret, nor even to say whether so sketchy a design was really worth framing.

Mr. CHURCHILL, in opening the debate on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, asked Members to look at the Irish question with "the modern eye." He must have meant "The Glad Eye."

The provisions of the Shops Act have aroused so much ill-feeling in barbers' shops, according to one account, that several Cabinet Ministers are now careful to do their own shaving.

How, it is being asked, will the promoters of "Shakespeare's England" at Earl's Court be able to work in the flip-flaps and the wiggle-woggles, and similar sensational attractions which seem to be necessary to the success of a modern exhibition? We understand that these will all be there under the title, "What Shakespeare Missed."

The Pall Mall Gazette draws attention to the fact that in France there are

statues to QUEEN VICTORIA and KING EDWARD, JOHN STUART MILL, SHAKESPEARE, JENNER, and LORD BROUGHAM, and asks whether there is a single monument to a Frenchman in this country. The state of affairs is not so bad as our contemporary imagines. We have one of WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

The Nation informs us that Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT is about to leave Fontainebleau and to reside permanently in England. If this report be true it is one of the most signal compliments which have been paid to this country for some time.

Messrs. PITMAN have just published a new volume entitled "Wool" in their "Common Commodities of Commerce"

Also "A Browbeaten Husband" writes to say that Mr. Dawson cannot have seen his (the writer's) wife's new hat.

Alterations in the service for the burial of the dead, to make it suitable for persons of bad as well as for those of good character, were suggested at the meeting of Convocation last week. We understand that a series of demonstrations by persons of bad character is to be held all over the country in order to strengthen the hands of the reformers.

We can find no excuse for the misprinter who referred to *The Printers' Pie Trust* as *The Printers' Pie Crust*.



"THESE THICK FRAMES ARE A GOOD IDEA."

Thirty shillings in gold have been found by some men cleaning out the slot line of the tramways in High Road, Clapton. To drop a penny in the slot is a common proceeding, but this looks as if someone has been overdoing it.

An undertaker's advertisement figured on the official programme of the Health Week at Kingston-on-Thames. This is a pretty tribute to the influence of that admirable movement. The undertakers are evidently realising already that it will become increasingly difficult for them to get business.

Series. Mr. MAXWELL is fortunate to have been first in the field with his *In Cotton Wool*.

"When Persia was most prosperous," says a lecturer, "poetry was at its worst." So, after all, the motives of many of our poets may be altruistic.

It is reported that, a short time ago, the lions that guard the Nelson Monument started "sponging." We see no objection to this. It is a cleanly habit.

Mr. C. E. DAWSON, in a lecture at the Camera Club, declared that the ugliest thing in London was a man's silk hat, and suggested as a substitute a Roman helmet, similar to the headgear of the members of the Fire Brigade. A correspondent would like to know whether he should wear a morning coat or a frock coat with it; and what about spats?

The Journalistic Touch.

"A party of eight started into the sealed passages of the cave at two o'clock, and they did not return to daylight again until late last night."—*Daily Dispatch*.

The Daylight Saving Bill seems to be at work here.

Life in the Provinces.

"Two wasps have been sighted off Birkenhead."—*Yorkshire Evening Post*.

And the blue-bottle which was observed circling over Liverpool last month is never mentioned now at local tea-parties.

"To the first quart of strained water add cold water, and the dirt will come out of the coat and look new."—*Liverpool Echo*. And then you can put the new dirt on another coat.

"Suffering seems a tombstone hung round us; in reality, it is a weight to keep down the diver while he is collecting pearls."—*Hendon Times*. So we discovered when we collected this pearl.

THE STRIKE OF TAILORS.

(Thoughts after a visit to the Royal Academy.)

TAILORS! Your insurrection rives my heart!

I was to have a waistcoat made,
An evening waistcoat, proper to a smart
Occasion, fitting close as suede,
With points depending halfway to the knee,
And now—it cannot be!

Inside its virgin samite as I sat,
The cynosure of eyes, the hub
Of incidental conversation at
The Poets' Self-effacement Club,
I should have made my mark, I feel convinced,
Upon the 18th inst.

Strikes I have borne ere now, as Britons can,
With cheek unblenched, with head sublime;
When coal was off I faced it like a man
(Being out of England at the time);
But this comes nearer home; this new unrest
Touches me on the chest.

The moment you select is too unfair—
Now, when our youth would fain rehearse
The change from vernal bloom to summer-wear;
And yet you might have done far worse,
Might have declined, last season, to compose
Our Coronation clo's.

What we had lost if you had struck just then,
Burlington House is witness: here,
Figures from that high pageant live again,
Posing in full official gear
(Notably I remark the very natty
Suit of Sir A. SCOTT-GATTY).

Harder the blow, though this were hard enough,
Had you refused to ply your thread
For common portraits where the tailored stuff
Kindly eclipses face and head;
You would have ruined half the staple toil
Of such as work in oil.

So, when I think what havoc might have been
In Art's domain, I am resigned
To waive my waistcoat, and with soul serene,
Walking the Park, to view my kind
Enforced, in Summer airs, to trail the Spring's
Belated trouserings. O. S.

The Diver.

"An item which was deservedly appreciated and encored was Chopin's Pollonaise 'Sea Miner.'"—*Wexford Free Press*.

"One diner at a City restaurant yesterday had just reached the fish at 2.30, when his favourite waiter, with an apologetic cough, ingratiatingly remarked, 'Shall you require anything more, sir? I have to go to luncheon myself now, sir.' This is compulsory under the Act."—*Daily Mail*.

There will be an outcry when the first waiter is sent to prison for omitting the apologetic cough.

"An unattended perambulator, containing a baby, at Willesden yesterday started down an incline, ran on to the canal towing-path, and dropped into the water. Walter Norwood, who witnessed the accident from the bridge, promptly dived into the water, rescued the baby, and handed it over to its mother.

The Luxury of a bath is incomplete without the addition of—'s Ammonia. . . . Adet."—*Morning Post*.

Seeing, however, that it was quite an unpremeditated affair on the part of both bathers, they may be forgiven for leaving out the ammonia.

THE SECOND CITY.

May, 1912.—The news that Glasgow is seeking parliamentary powers to increase her boundaries and swallow up Govan, Partick, and other suburbs, has been received in Liverpool with no little consternation and dismay. Despite the exceedingly disappointing results of the 1911 census, it must not be supposed that the enterprising seaport on the Mersey ever lost hope. On the contrary, it was full of confidence in its ability to make up the necessary leeway before the close of the present decade. It is now, however, estimated that Greater Glasgow will contain over one million inhabitants, and Liverpool recognises that unless effective action is taken at once there will no longer be any room for doubt—even among its own optimistic inhabitants—as to which is the Second City of the Empire.

September, 1912.—Our Special Correspondent learns that the Liverpool Municipality now hopes to promote a Bill in Parliament with a view to incorporate Birkenhead, Wallasey, and—probably—Ormskirk. Doubt has been expressed, however, in local circles as to whether this will quite do it, some authorities declaring that the total will still be a few thousands short. The figures for the last census are being closely scanned, and it is probable that—in order to make assurance double sure—Poulton-cum-Seacombe may be thrown in at the last moment.

January, 1915.—Glasgow has annexed Paisley. A municipal medal has been struck to celebrate the event.

May, 1915.—It is understood that Liverpool—after the recent appropriation of Hoylake and Lower Bebington—presented an ultimatum to the Lord Provost of Glasgow. Its actual terms have not transpired, but there can be little doubt that it pointed out the hopelessness of continuing the struggle and drew attention to the vast population of South Lancashire, all eagerly awaiting the invitation to dub themselves citizens of the Second City.

January, 1931.—The inclusion of Falkirk within the area of Greater Glasgow, while not in itself of any importance, has caused a growing feeling of uneasiness on the banks of the Mersey. It has been noticed that Glasgow's expansion in the last decade has all been in an easterly direction; and this sinister fact is a source of deep anxiety to her rival.

Later.—Liverpool has taken over Warrington.

January, 1932.—There is nothing at all startling in the New Year Annexations, published to-day. It may be assumed that London is quite prepared to move swiftly and effectively, should any of the threatened combinations in the North imperil her supremacy.

January, 1933.—The blow has fallen. Greater Glasgow has to-day roped in Edinburgh, Leith, Portobello and Fish-errow. Greater Liverpool's obvious counter-stroke has unexpectedly failed, as Greater Manchester has escaped from her clutches and grabbed Greater Birmingham on her own account. A frightful struggle is in prospect between the two Lancashire cities for the possession of Greater Widnes.

January, 1953.—Since the discovery of unlimited gold (in enormous nuggets of great purity) in the immediate vicinity of Ventnor no census has been taken in the Isle of Wight. But experts are now convinced that Greater Ventnor is already the Second City of the Empire.

"The water is less cold than has been felt two months later than it was this year the first week in April."—*Guernsey Weekly Press*.

This is one of the "Sentences we generally decide to begin again some other way"; and we would have called it that only it makes such an awkward title.



FOR AULD LANG SYNE.

UNCLE SAM (*philosophically watching the Taft-Roosevelt scrap*). "WAL! I GUESS OLD FRIENDS ARE THE BEST!"





Policeman (to motorist, who, having inadvertently left his car in charge of an expert thief, has had his magneto stolen). "Now, Sir, WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO SWEAR THAT YOU HAD IT WHEN YOU ARRIVED?"

MORNING-POST-IMPRESSIONISM.

[Being a feeble attempt to rival the inimitable literary methods and profound musical knowledge of the musical critic of *The Morning Post*, who, in the issue of May 2, included *Tristan und Isolde* in the Ring.]

To complete the present cycle of Wagnerian music-dramas VERDI's *Carmen* was performed last Saturday at the Royal Opera. Originally composed as a *lever de rideau* by the veteran Italian maestro, under the title, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, the opera is now universally accepted as a typical work, and its performances are greeted with generous toleration by the opera-going public, though it cannot be seriously contended that the ethical significance of the story conduces to the maintenance of a decorous conception of civic life.

The performance was for the most part in such capable hands, or perhaps we should say, throats, that the meritoriousness of the rendition appealed with convincing force to the more serious-minded section of the auditors. Madame Fritzi Langerzahn has appeared many hundred times in the part of *Carmen*, but on this occasion, as during the whole of her present engagement, she indicated an advance of

redoubtable dimensions upon her previous efforts. She met every demand on her resources with a determination that evinced great physical energy reinforced by patient artistic study of the most compelling verisimilitude, and her handling of the castanets in the scene when the infatuated dragoon violates the dictates of discipline at the call of amorous inclination elicited unstinted panegyrics from all quarters of the house.

Signor Tombolini, as *Don José*, sustained his share in the representation with more than all his wonted zest, though he did not invariably succeed in furnishing the chaste quality of timbre to which he has familiarised his numerous admirers. One could not help feeling that to an artist of his sensitive temperament the somewhat glaring scheme of colour embodied in the integuments of his nether man must have impaired the equanimity which as a rule he is so fortunate in being able to evolve from the recesses of his dramatic imagination. But, with these reservations, his impersonation was marked by a gallant and soldierlike bearing such as one might naturally expect in an officer, even though of subordinate rank, belonging

to a race renowned for their peninsular dignity.

Herr Hugo Rumpelmayer remains the best representative of the tauricidal gladiator that has yet emerged on the metropolitan boards. His range of facial expression, indicative of the whole gamut of emotion, is a masterpiece of lineamental exposition. The *Micaela* of the cast was Madame Gemma d'Antichità, whose impeccable demureness of demeanour invested the rôle with an ingenuous archness wholly germane to the situation. In Mlle. Eugénie Pipette was found a *Mercedes* of greater youthfulness than usual, but her appearance supported her rich vocal tone. The reception of the work was marked by a cordiality which testified how fully the audience appreciated the meritorious efforts of the artists concerned in a thoroughly conscientious rendition.

The Daily Chronicle denies the existence of "caves" among the Ministerialists, and protests that the Government policy is "far from being the cause of dry-rot." But does this prove anything? We ourselves have often noticed the absence of dry-rot as a feature of caves, especially sea-caves.

THE MIXTURE, NEW STYLE.

You want to know the true inward history of the glorious speech which made the miserable minions of an enslaved democracy tremble in their venal shoes, and sent spasms of sacred jubilation to irradiate the vales of Ulster and the hills of Wales, to say nothing of the habitations of the Primrose League, with which our own beloved Britain is magnificently dotted. The speech, you say, made the name of Applegate for ever famous. Well, I'm not going to say a word against Dick Applegate. He was a good enough sort, free with his subscriptions and a steady-going figure-head at bazaars and smoking concerts; but he was just a little thick in the skull, and the plain fact is that without my help that speech of his would never have existed. I'll tell you how it all came about.

We were sitting in Applegate's smoking-room. Dick was curiously glum and depressed. I had done all I could to cheer him up—read him extracts from BONAR LAW's last great fighting speech and picked paragraphs from Mr. LEO MAXSE's monthly compendium of the elegances, but all was useless. At last he made an effort and spoke: "The fact is," he said, "I've got to make a bit of a speech on Friday at our Junior Senior Constitutional Association. It's to be a big affair. Some of our greatest leaders are to be there, and of course I shall have to chip in with a vote of thanks or something. The Chairman tells me they will look to me to give them some real hot stuff on Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment, and I've been cudgelling my brains for two or three days, but I can't work it. The words won't come."

"Look here, Applegate," I said, "this is serious. Think what an opportunity you have. Confiscation; spoliation; robbery; immoral aggression on the sacred rights of the Ulster minority; the brains and the brawn of Ireland, as embodied in Captain CRAIG and Mr. MOORE, placed under the disgraceful heel of a bedollared REDMOND; traitorous attack on the monarchy by a cringing but evanescent majority of mean-spirited political mountebanks; loyalty and patriotism bartered away at the bidding of a paltry pettifogger; religion dragged in the mud of faction by curs without convictions and sneaks without souls—upon my honour, Applegate, there's stuff enough in the present situation for fifty speeches. Study your CARSON, my boy; read up your F. E. SMITH; dip deep into your BONAR LAW; take a hint or two from WINTERTON; tell the Ministry that Mr. GLADSTONE would disown them if he could revisit the scene of his statesmanlike activities; and, if you want some real plums of logic and language, spend half-an-hour or so in the immediate neighbourhood of a brace of Welsh Bishops."

The upshot of it was that Applegate asked me to write down some notes for him. I did it, and he thanked me

enthusiastically. On the Friday he made his speech, and on the following day the whole country was ringing with it. *The Daily Mail* called it an unsurpassable effort in oratory, *The Daily Telegraph* said it was better than BRIGHT in his best day, and Applegate was a made man. Now that all the actors have passed away from the scene, I don't mind telling you that the speech was substantially mine, but there was one peculiarity about it. Applegate got my notes out of their proper order, but he was so carried away by the occasion that he didn't mind. He mixed up Home Rule and Disestablishment and Wales and Ireland inextricably, but it didn't in the least affect the success of his speech. Indeed the Chairman said that he had never in his whole life listened to any speaker who had so completely and brilliantly covered the ground.

"The name of Applegate," he continued, "will now take its stand beside CHATHAM and BEACONSFIELD and CHAMBERLAIN." Do you remember the purplest of Applegate's patches? This is how it went:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we are met together at a crisis in the affairs of our country. Other Ministries have been mean; this Ministry is fraudulent. Let them learn that the free men of England will not allow Ulster to be robbed of the great and splendid organisation which for centuries has spread the light of religion through the length and breadth of Wales. If a Church is to be attacked and despoiled by these time-servers, led by the outcast of Limehouse, a million blades will leap from their scabbards in defence of Ulster's patriot Presbyterians. Far be it from me to counsel insurrection, but if ever men were justified in taking arms it is those who have rallied in defence of the money which the liberality of pious benefactors has bequeathed for the purposes of the Church in Wales. That Church is not lightly to be treated as the milch cow of REDMOND and his gang of paid politicians. Are men like that to be allowed to break up our Empire, to control

our armed forces, and to batten on the plunder of the poor parishes of Wales? Are cathedrals to be turned into dancing saloons without a protest from those whose welfare is inseparably bound up with the teeming industries of Belfast? Let us hurl back the challenge so rashly given by the pestilential faction whose presence in the council-chamber of the nation is an outrage to the Sovereign and an offence to every decent-minded man. Ulster may perish, but she will not perish unaided by the Bishops and Clergy of a country whose only fault has been to produce the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. St. Asaph will fight, gentlemen, and St. Asaph will be right."

There were other bits more or less like this, but this was the best. Applegate never quite repeated his triumph, but he was in great request as a platform speaker for years afterwards. When he got his Privy-Councillorship he sent me a silver cigar-box.



THE LATE COAL STRIKE HAS CAUSED EXTRAORDINARY INTEREST TO BE TAKEN IN THE PICTURE ENTITLED, "A DESERTED COAL MINE," BY MR. INKERMEN KNIGHT, THE MINER ARTIST.

THE SIMPLICITY, BREADTH OF TREATMENT AND TRANQUILITY OF COLOURING OF THIS PICTURE MAKE IT APPEAL TO ALL TRUE LOVERS OF ART, PEACE AND CHEAP COAL.



Short-sighted Old Soul. "DEAR ME, AUGUSTUS! IT'S EXTRAORDINARY HOW THE LOWER CLASSES AFFORD TO PLAY GOLF!"

A PRAYER TO MAY.

Not for the bluebell carpet spread
Under the blossom-roof,
Not for the cowslip's sake, I dread,
Not in the birds' behoof
I ask you, May—be gentle, ma'am;
Sorry of course I always am
When rough winds spoil the unweaned jam,
And the rathe swallow, almost dead,
Cries that the Spring was spoof.

Tears for the bloom of peach and plum,
Tears for the forest floor,
Tears may be ours for songsters dumb,
But, oh! far more, far more
For "nuts" that feel the force unkind
Of wintry days—for nuts whose rind
Gleams with a gloss for Spring designed,
Suits that could drown a rolling drum
And vests that shriek and roar.

There is a young man up our road,
And who can say what vats
Empurpled his attire, what woad
The neck-wear that he pats?
For weeks he has gone up to town
Tilting a straw hat on his crown,
His face already slightly brown,
He keeps a sort of "you-be-blowed"
Languor and two white spats.

And yet a month or more agone
He was a worm, an ort;
Shabby the garb he used to don,
Dusty his tile, his port
Showed nothing of the man he is,
Forth bursting from his chrysalis,
A study in life's harmonies;—
His comrades sometimes call him John,
And sometimes "good old sport."

But oh! if sudden storms of rain
Should make him doff that vest,
If darkling he should fare again
To the tube-station, dressed
In his old bowler and worn suit,
That were a sorrow more acute
Than all the spoiling of the fruit,
More poignant than the swallow's pain
His agony confessed.

Therefore I ask your mercy, May:
From all dark morns and dim
Spare us, except just once, we'll say
(Pardon a poet's whim),—
Just once the kind of day one loathes,
And let John wear his cast-off clothes
And hurry shamefaced, full of oaths,
Tube-wards, and let me pass that way
And smile one smile on him. EVOE.

THE CONTINENTAL MANNER.

OF course I should recognise Simpson anywhere, even at a masked ball. Besides, who but Simpson would go to a fancy-dress dance as a short-sighted executioner, and wear his spectacles outside his mask? But it was a surprise to me to see him there at all.

"Samuel," I said gravely, tapping him on the shoulder, "I shall have to write home about this."

He turned round with a start.

"Hallo!" he said eagerly. "How splendid! But, my dear old chap, why aren't you in costume?"

"I am," I explained. "I've come as an architect. Luckily the evening clothes of an architect are similar to my own. Excuse me, Sir, but do you want a house built?"

"How do you like my dress? I am an executioner. I left my axe in the cloak-room."

"So I observe. You know, in real life one hardly ever meets an executioner who wears spectacles. And yet, of course, if one can't see the head properly without glasses——"

"By Jove," said Simpson, "there she is again."

Columbine in a mask hurried past us and mixed with the crowd. What one could see of her face looked pretty; it seemed to have upset Simpson altogether.

"Ask her for a dance," I suggested. "Be a gay dog, Simpson. Wake London up. At a masked ball one is allowed a certain amount of licence."

"Exactly," said Simpson in some excitement. "One naturally looks for a little Continental *abandon* at these dances." (*Portrait of Simpson showing Continental abandon.*) "And so I did ask her for a dance just now."

"She was cold, Samuel, I fear?"

"She said, 'Sorry, I'm full up.'"

"A ruse, a mere subterfuge. Now, look here, ask her again, and be more debonair and dashing this time. What you want is to endure her with the spirit of revelry. Perhaps you'd better go to the bar first and have a dry ginger-ale, and then you'll feel more in the Continental mood."

"By Jove, I will," said Simpson with great decision.

I wandered into the ball-room and looked round. Columbine was standing in a corner alone; some bouncer had cut her dance. As I looked at her I thought of Simpson letting himself go and smiled to myself. She caught the edge of the smile and unconsciously smiled back. Remembering the good advice which I had just given another, I decided to risk it.

"Do you ever dance with architects?" I asked her.

"I do sometimes," she said. "Not in Lent," she added.

"In Lent," I agreed, "one has to give up the more furious pleasures. Shall we just finish off this dance? And don't let's talk shop about architecture."

We finished the dance and retired to the stairs.

"I want you to do something for me," I began cautiously.

"Anything except go into supper again. I've just done that for somebody else."

"No, it's not that. The fact is I have a great friend called Simpson."

"It sounds a case for help," she murmured.

"He is here to-night disguised as an executioner in glasses. He is, in fact, the only spectacled beheader present. You can't miss him."

"All the same, I managed to just now," she gurgled.

"I know. He asked you for a dance and you rebuffed him. Well, he is now fortifying himself with a small dry ginger, and he will then ask you again. Do be kind this time; he's really a delightful person when you get to know him. For instance, both his whiskers are false."

"No doubt I should grow to love him," she agreed; "but I didn't much like his outward appearance. However, if both whiskers are false, and if he's really a friend of yours——"

"He is naturally as harmless as a lamb," I said; "but at a dance like this he considers it his duty to throw a little Continental *abandon* into his manner."

Columbine looked at me thoughtfully, nodding her head, and slowly began to smile.

"You see," I said, "the possibilities."

"He shall have his dance," she said decidedly.

"Thank you very much. I should like to ask for another dance for myself later on, but I am afraid I should try to get out of you what he said, and that wouldn't be fair."

"Of course I shouldn't tell you."

"Well, anyhow, you'll have had enough of us by then. Oh, by the way," I added, as we walked back, "I think I ought to inform you that I'm not really an architect; this is only a disguise."

"Still, the plan is very sound," she said with a smile.

* * * * *

So I can't say with authority what happened between Simpson and Columbine when they met. But Simpson and I had a cigarette together after-

wards and certain things came out; enough to make it plain that she must have enjoyed herself.

"Oh, I say, old chap," he began jauntily, "do you know—match, thanks—er, whereabouts is Finsbury Circus?"

"You're too old to go to a circus now, Simpson. Come and have a day at the Polytechnic instead."

"Don't be an ass; it's a place like Oxford Circus. I suppose it's in the City somewhere? I wonder," he murmured to himself, "what she would be doing in the City at eleven o'clock in the morning."

"Perhaps her rich uncle is in a bank, and she wants to shoot him. I wish you'd tell me what you're talking about."

Simpson took off his mask and spectacles and wiped his brow.

"Dear old chap," he said in a solemn voice, "in the case of a woman one cannot tell even one's best friend. You know how it is."

"Well, if there's going to be a duel you should have chosen some quieter spot than Finsbury Circus. The motor-buses distract one's aim."

Simpson was silent for a minute or two. Then a foolish smile flitted across his face, to be followed suddenly by a look of alarm.

"Don't do anything that your mother wouldn't like," I said warningly.

He frowned and put on his mask again.

"Are chrysanthemums in season?" he asked casually. "Anyhow, I suppose I could always get a yellow one?"

"You could, Simpson. And you could put it in your button-hole, so that you can be recognised, and go to Finsbury Circus to meet somebody at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning. Samuel, I'm ashamed of you. Er—where do you lunch?"

"At the Carlton. Old chap, I got quite carried away. Things seemed to be arranged before I knew where I was."

"And what's she going to wear so that you can recognise her?"

"Yes," said Simpson, getting up, "that's the worst of it. I told her it was quite out of date, and that only the suburbs wore fashions a year old, but she insisted on it. I had no idea she was that sort of girl. Well, I'm in for it now." He sighed heavily and went off for another ginger-ale.

I think that I must be at Finsbury Circus to-morrow, for certainly no Columbine in a harem skirt will be there. Simpson in his loneliness will be delighted to see me, and then we can throw away his button-hole and have a nice little lunch together.

A. A. M.



SCENE—Church Parade, Hyde Park.

MR. AND MRS. JONES LABORIOUSLY TALK HURLINGHAM, ASCOT, MOTOR-TOURS, ETC., FOR THE BENEFIT OF MR. AND MRS. ROBINSON. THE ROBINSONS DO THE SAME FOR THE JONES'S.



UNFORTUNATELY THEY MEET GOING HOME IN THE CRICKLEWOOD 'BUS.



Old Party (recovering from influenza). "THANKY, MISS, I'M BETTER NOW; BUT I 'EARS AS 'OW YOU 'VE 'AD IT, TOO!"
District Visitor. "YES; BUT I'M NEARLY ALL RIGHT NOW. IT HAS ONLY LEFT ME WITH A LITTLE NEURALGIA IN MY HEAD."
Old Party (sympathetically). "DEAR, DEAR, MISS, THAT'S BAD; BUT THEY DO SAY AS IT DO ALLUS ATTACK THE WEAKEST PART."

THE RULING PASSION.

At this time of the year there must be many Golfing-Cricketers who turn from their constant study of the Rules of Golf to the contemplation of the Rules of Cricket, and find themselves completely at a loss to understand the meaning of the latter. It is clear that if the summer game is to retain its popularity its Rules must be re-written in language that comes within the comprehension of the earnest Golfer.

A brief specimen will illustrate this idea:—

If the ball, after having been in the opinion of the Umpire legally delivered by the bowler in accordance with the provisions of Rules 10, 11 and 12 and the Appendices to these Rules, touch, brush or impinge upon the hand of the striker (whether the hand of the striker be in motion at the time or not), but not if it touch, brush or impinge upon the nose, throat, chest, ears, or any portion of the anatomy other than the hand of the striker, whether the striker's eyes be open or closed, and not if, by reason of his having an insect in his eye at the moment of the delivery of the ball or

for any other reason apart from squint or other chronic physical disability which the Umpire shall consider fair and reasonable, the striker be prevented from obtaining a proper sight of the ball and signify his unpreparedness by uttering in an audible voice "Not ready!" or an equivalent phrase, provided that it be readily comprehensible by a person of average education (for definition of "average education" see footnote), be secured by a fielder whether by the hand, mouth, stomach, or other part of the person (for the purposes of this Rule the leg-guards of the wicket-keeper shall be considered "another part of the person") or by any number of such parts acting in conjunction, whether belonging to one, two or more fielders, before touching, in the opinion of the Umpire as provided for in Rule 47, the ground or any grass or other vegetation growing from or lying upon the ground, provided that the ball when secured shall not have passed outside the boundaries previously arranged by the two Umpires and agreed upon by the Captains of the respective sides, then the striker is out, unless it be decided by the Umpire on appeal that the

case comes within the operation of any one of the seventeen Appendices to this rule or of any other Rule, Footnote or Appendix in force for the time being and applicable thereto.

COTTAGE GARDEN PRAYER.

*Little garden gods,
 You of good bestowing,
 You of kindly showing
 Mid the pottings and the pods,
 Watchers of geranium beds,
 Pinks and stocks and suchlike orders,
 Rose, and sleepy poppy-heads,—
 Bless us in our borders,
 Little garden gods!*

*Little garden gods,
 Bless the time of sowing,
 Watering and growing;
 Lastly, when our sunflower nods,
 And our rambler's red array
 Waits the honey-bee her labours,
 Bless our garden that it may
 Beat our next-door neighbour's,
 Little garden gods!*

A Modern Argus.

"I have seen some of these trucks filled with my own eyes."—*Evening News.*
 Ready to be worked into boot buttons.



TURN AND TURN ABOUT.

IMPATIENT DRUID. "NOW THEN, WHEN ARE YOU GOING ON WITH MY HAIR?"

BARBER ASQUITH. "COMING SIR, COMING." (*To Irishman*) "I'LL JUST TRIM HIM A BIT MORE, AND THEN I'LL COME BACK AND FINISH YOUR FACE."



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Commons, Monday, April 29.
—The ways of the honourable Member who desires to take opportunity provided by the Question-hour to obtain cheap advertisement are not past finding out. On the contrary, they are almost childish in their ingenuousness. Most common form is to nip in with a supplementary question, if possible conveying personal aspersion upon Minister addressed or some of his colleagues. To-day, as it happened, there has been outbreak in another direction.

Standing Order directs that at a quarter to four catechism shall be cut off and business of Sitting entered upon. But there is a proviso that questions of an urgent character, which have not appeared on notice-paper, may be put, albeit the allotted time is fulfilled. It is here where opportunity of gentleman with his eye on the newspapers comes in. Ordinary Member who, in obedience to command, has duly given notice of a question, is not permitted to recite its terms. All he may do is to refer to its number on the printed paper. His shrewder brother, announcing a question of which he says he "has given the right honourable gentleman private notice," is privileged, amid silence of expectant House, to read its terms, which, with the Minister's reply, appear verbatim in Parliamentary reports.

Object of the proviso apparent. Occasion might easily arise where sudden occurrence of urgent moment would justify LEADER OF OPPOSITION or other representative Member in asking for instant information. The private notice questions put to-day, of which there were four or five, had no more claim to urgency than had the average interrogations standing on the printed paper.

However, there they were. They served their purpose, and when some presumably precious time had been spent upon them House got into Committee of Ways and Means on Budget proposals.

Question was that Committee should sanction the holding over of surplus

of six and a-half million realised in past financial year to meet possible contingencies in Naval expenditure. Situation awkward for patriotic Opposition. When scheme expounded in Budget of wily CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER gentlemen opposite applauded what they admitted was unexpectedly far-seeing precaution calculated to maintain supremacy of Navy. But it's the business of the Opposition to oppose. So to-night, saying little or nothing about provision made for what BYLES OF BRADFORD described as "those monsters the *Dreadnoughts*," which, he informed the Committee, he "had seen disporting themselves" (presum-



"NO SUCKING-DOVE COULD HAVE COOED 'ULSTER' MORE GENTLY."

ably like dolphins), they turned and rent the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER forasmuch as he had diverted this surplus from customary course of reduction of National Debt.

This a difficult position to defend. You can't eat your cake and have it. Having at disposal a realized surplus of six millions and a-half, you can't put it on one side to strengthen the Navy and at same time pass it on to reduce National Debt. House of Commons—God bless it!—is a master of the art of make-believe as practised by the *Marchioness* when entertaining *Dick Swiveller* in *Sally Brass's* kitchen. When she had no lemon-peel wherewith to flavour her cup of water she "made believe" she had and lapped the beverage with gusto. PRETYMAN, SON AUSTEN, GEORGE FABER, TERRELL—a new authority on Finance, with

childlike faith in the Financial Press—BANBURY, EVELYN CECIL, LORD BOB and eke HARRY CHAPLIN indignantly denounced conduct of CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER in his dealing with the Sinking Fund—conduct responsible, among other things, for the fall in Consols, the large blue flies in butchers' shops, and the nip of cold weather which to-day mocks the almanac record of the birth of Spring.

LLOYD GEORGE, with back to wall, cited figures showing that during six years Government have been in office they have cleared off considerably larger amount of National Debt than any of their predecessors—eleven million

a year against nine million discharged by SON AUSTEN when he was at the Treasury. But what of that? The Parliamentary game must be played whichever Party be in Opposition. Talk went on till shut up by closure, and the Labour Members, who won't have *Dreadnoughts* at any price, and Unionists, who want more than eight and won't wait, joining forces in division lobby, Government majority was reduced to 47.

Business done.—Budget proposal for dealing with last year's surplus sanctioned.

Tuesday.—At Westminster Youth and Age are, as COLERIDGE sang in exquisite verse, "housemates still."

The WINSOME WINSTON, aged 38, opened debate

on Second Reading of Home Rule Bill; Member for East Cavan, aged 90, who with rich Irish humour is named YOUNG, continued it.

WINSTON's speech presented interesting personality in new light. Has made his way to the front by hard hitting. A few weeks ago he set the Boyne aflame preaching on its banks the gospel of Home Rule. To-day no sucking dove could have cooed "Ulster" more gently. MOORE of North Armagh and CRAIG of East Down sat agast. They had come to howl; they remained almost to cheer. As for BONNER, he had a great stroke of luck, escaping opportunity to interrupt by damaging remark whose flight might have resembled that of the boomerang.

WINSTON's novel position assumed by clever device. Presented himself to crowded audience in character of young

man from the country, at school when Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893 were to the fore. True he had read something of those direful times. His fresh young mind had been scared by stories of extreme Party animosity, even of a free fight on floor of House. These things must be believed since they are written in history. The younger generation, coming into their heritage, had no personal knowledge of the alleged facts. They approached consideration of third Home Rule Bill with open mind, desiring to consider it simply on its merits in relation to circumstances of the day.

House, gathered in expectation of slashing speech irritating to Ulster, listened in evidently pleased amazement. Instead of clash of cheers and counter-cheers the level flow of speech was broken every now and then by decorous approval.

WINSTON, conscious of presence of old Adam, fearful he might pop up at some turn of unfettered speech, observed precaution of writing out his new evangel and reading it from manuscript. Notable as he proceeded how he got over little difficulty about pronunciation of letter "s" that embarrassed his maiden speech and others immediately following. He then slurred the plain "s" into "sh." As SARK pointed out at the time, had he lived when JEPHTHAH ruled Israel he would have come out scathless at the passage of Jordan when the Gileadites slew the Ephraimites. "Say Shibboleth," challenged the crafty sons of Gilead. The hapless Ephraimite betrayed his nationality by responding "Sibboleth," and was straightway slain. Had the test been put the other way about and the Ephraimite WINSTON commanded to say "Sibboleth" he would never have lived to sit in succession on both sides of House of Commons.

Business done.—FIRST LORD OF ADMIRALTY moved Second Reading of Home Rule Bill. On behalf of Opposition WALTER LONG moved rejection.

"Some startling facts are disclosed in the annual return by the City Chamberlain on the city churches. There are ten buildings included on the list, and these provide accommodation for 9,045 persons."—*Glasgow Paper.*

"Those d—d little dots," as Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL remarked.

"There were two delightful little train bearers, and they were prettily dressed in long frocks of white satin with lace caps, and each carried a posy of panama hats."

Surrey Advertiser.

Very pretty, but not so fashionable now as a bouquet of bowlers.

DAVID versus JONATHAN.

It is greatly to be regretted that the public quarrel between those old friends, President TAFT and Colonel ROOSEVELT, is having influence all over the world, and in emulation ancient bonds of amity are snapping like cotton. In response to inquiries which Mr. PUNCH has been making it is clear that among our own Tafts and Roosevelts are not only Mr. LLOYD GEORGE and Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL, but those famous erstwhile allies, Mr. BELLOC and Mr. CHESTERTON.



"THE WILY CHANCELLOR."

"FOR THE NAVY! I DON'T THINK!"

Interviewed yesterday on the subject of his break with Mr. CHESTERTON, Mr. BELLOC admitted that they were no longer the David and Jonathan that they once were.

"No," he said, and the brightness of his eye witnessed the veracity of his speech,—"no, I had to give him up. To tell you the truth, he is too paradoxical. Once upon a time I may have liked that, or at least tolerated it, but to-day I am all for business directness. And then, again, his size. Terrific, you know. Too big. There are limits."

Mr. CHESTERTON, whom our representative found watering his cauliflower in his Buckinghamshire garden, was equally frank and final. "Yes,"

he said, "it's true. I have permanently severed my old association with BELLOC. Not that he is a bad sort—on the contrary, I think well of him, within bounds—but he's vigorous, you know. So appalling. I am a lethargic man; I move slowly. BELLOC is all fire and intensity. And where is it carrying him? Ah!"

"Mr. BELLOC," I put in, "accuses you of being too paradoxical."

"Does he?" cried the great seer. "Does he? He too! Oh, how tired I am of that charge! Paradoxical indeed. I am not paradoxical; I am plainer than the hills. Tell him that if I am paradoxical he is—what shall I say?—an Oxford demagogue. Tell him that."

Encountered on the Terrace, Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL did not deny the suggestion that Mr. LLOYD GEORGE was no longer the brother he once had been.

"Not so long ago," he said, "we were comparing strawberry marks on our arms. There are none left to-day. I have had mine removed by a skin expert, and I believe the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER has done the same."

"But what, may I ask," I said, "has led to this unfortunate breach?"

"It is not unfortunate, Sir," said the FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY; "it's fortunate. Nothing is so fortunate as to discover a man's true colours before it is too late."

"And what, then," I said, "is your complaint of the CHANCELLOR?"

"My complaint, Sir? My complaint is that he is a Welshman. That he is named DAVID. That he sits on the Front Bench. That he exists at all. He annoys me. He is eloquent, and I dislike that. He is ambitious, and I dislike that. Worst of all, he wants me to stick stamps on forms for my servants—those servants whom I care for as my own brood."

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, on the other hand, was not so communicative. "Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL," he contented himself with saying, "is a young man in a hurry with a large size in hats. If I bought him at my valuation of him and sold him at his own I should be richer than ANDREW CARNEGIE and have to pay myself a fortune every year in income-tax. The gods give us a good conceit of ourselves by all means, but not too good. That way danger lies. I used to like CHURCHILL. I thought him a promising boy and did what I could for him. But no more."

And, sighing a deep sigh, the weary Titan returned to the perusal of Mr. GRANT's amendment.



Irate Householder. "WHY CAN'T YOU ANSWER THIS BELL SOONER? THE FIRE'S OUT AGAIN. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?"
Maid-of-All-Work (resigned). "I'VE BIN PACKIN' UP MY THINGS. I CAN'T STOP TO DO THAT; IT'LL LIGHT ITSELF SOON; THE 'OUSE IS AFIRE!"

INSULT AND INJURY.

"COCKROACHES AND OTHER ABOMINATIONS."—*Extract from a letter in a morning paper.*

"OTHER abominations"! Let the libel stand confest.
 That is a thing that wakes the bile in every beetle's breast,
 And as a loyal cockroach I indignantly protest.

It's true we are not popular. I know, whene'er we peep
 Forth on a cold and wakeful world, pale women scream and leap,

And brave men own to being struck all over of a heap,

Till one more gallant than the rest, though shivering at the core,

Cremates us with the horrid tongs or, springing from the floor,

Crackling descends, and leaves us sweltering flatly in our gore.

And yet we are a harmless folk, and, humbly though we crawl,
 Is that a cause for slaughter? E'en the looks that so appal
 I do not think that you've the right to cavil at at all.

Indeed, if you consider from the proper point of view,
 We're every bit as natty and as elegant as you,
 Our legs are more ingenious, and we haven't only two.

But still, it isn't that so much. Observe us and recoil,
 Nay, slay us, for we're used to it; what really makes me boil

Is insult at the lips of those for whom we have to toil.

Our job is not a lofty one and not what one would choose,
 But it's a deal more dignified than writing to abuse
 The folk that play the scavenger when you retire to snooze.

For, when your lusty snores affront the deep and throbbing scene,

Then we come forth to labour and to keep your kitchens clean,

And make a nightly meal on what would turn your cockles green.

"Other abominations." It's a neat and human touch.
 I don't suppose it struck you that to label him as such
 Might hurt a beetle's feelings and depress him very much.

No, trample us to atoms or commit us to the flames;
 We try to do our duty, and we make no further claims;
 But, even though you murder us, you needn't call us names.

DUM-DUM.

"Mr. Napier, during his long period of railway work, has seen many changes, including the repainting of Buchanan Street Station."

Glasgow Herald.

What more can life offer?

AT THE PLAY.

"LOVE—AND WHAT THEN?"

It was bad luck for Mr. CYRIL MAUDE that he should have missed the best part of the play through coming in only just in time to see the curtain fall on the First Act. Up to the point of his episcopal entrance, "signalised," as the cricket reporters say, by a clap of thunder (as though he were a demon),



The Vicar's wife gets a short Pierrette skirt as a preliminary to a high kick over the traces.

Rev. John Burden ... Mr. GAYER MACKAY.
Mrs. Burden ... Miss MARGERY MAUDE.

we had been having some really excellent and natural light-comedy; but for the rest of the time, if one excepts a delightful scene between the three clerical types, the author was perhaps a little inclined to press for his effects; requiring, indeed, in the last resort, to fall back upon a mislaid baby and a squirted soda-siphon, always a confession of weakness.

His motive, too, became a little obscure. We were constantly asked to keep on being merry on the edge of a rumbling volcano; and the ultimate emergence of a mere mouse never satisfied us that the supply of lava was exhausted. And may I respectfully beg Mr. MACDONALD HASTINGS not to blend his tears and laughter too light-heartedly; not to play about with the emotions of his audience; not, for instance, to make a wife say of her lover, with a fine resolve, "I shall never see him again," and then let us down with the flippancy, "I shan't have the opportunity"? Mr. BARRIE, being privileged, has the sole rights in this kind.

The burlesque of the melodramatic stage in the Second Act might have been fairly amusing if it had not been so palpably dragged in to eke out the

time. But worse was to follow in the Third Act. There is nothing more deadly than to announce beforehand that an event is to happen at a certain time and then put a clock on the stage so that the audience may know exactly how long their patience has to be tried with stop-gap dialogue. It was all timed to a nicety; but in the meanwhile some of us were in full sympathy with the bishop, who frankly went to sleep.

It was not Mr. MAUDE's fault that his rôle was too easy for him, too familiar; and that his bishop might just as well have been an admiral or a general officer or a country squire, except that the liberality of his outlook took on a certain piquancy from the fact of his being a hierarch.

As a young wife in revolt against her husband's clerical discipline Miss MARGERY MAUDE was always charming, and, in the First Act, fairly understandable also. Afterwards one became worried by the thought that she didn't know what she wanted, but wouldn't be happy till she got it. The lady's simplicity was a little too disingenuous, her naïveté a little too complex. And I frankly suspect that the innocent wife who wants to be kissed hard by a man who is not her husband in order to know what it feels like, irrespectively of the loveliness of the kisser, is a type of fledgling not to be found under just any hedge.

The one really satisfactory performance was that of Mr. GAYER MACKAY as the Rev. John Burden, her husband. I have seldom seen a better or more convincing deportment. One so rarely finds a clergyman on the stage who is neither heroic nor ludicrous, neither angel nor ass. In a part that might easily have been made laughable Mr. MACKAY preserved a reasonable and even sympathetic dignity and seemed veritably born to the cloth. Mr. ERNEST GRAHAM, as the Bishop's chaplain, was extremely funny. Gauche and taciturn, untouched by the diversions of musical-chairs or hunt-the-slipper, he suddenly found his humanity in a shattering outburst of enthusiasm over the fielding of a certain Somersetshire cover-point. Miss FRANCES IVOR, as Mrs. Burden, senior, was excellent with the good things she was given to say in the First Act, but they did not last out; and after this mother of ten had told us that she had never loved her late husband, and that her babies would have been no bar to her leaving him if she had not run short of good nurses, the sentimental note on which she made her final exit left me rather cold. Mr. MATURIN had a thankless and unheroic part as a philandering Sapper, but played it with a nice easy looseness

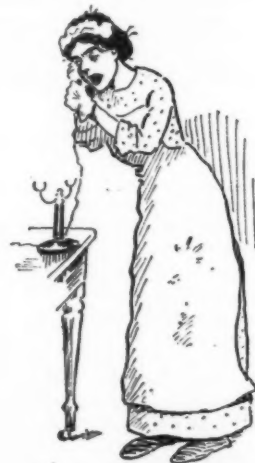
of manner. The Misses CELLI and GREATWICH were satisfactory flappers; but they should be told that even flappers may have the *joie de vivre* without necessarily breaking into a delirious gallop when they go off the stage.

I will add that Mr. BRUCE SMITH's drawing-room at the Vicarage was a real room that must have been lived in.

Whatever I may have said to the contrary notwithstanding, I enjoyed the play very much and laughed loudly and often. But in the retrospect my logical mind rebels against its inconclusiveness. The question in the title, *Love—and What Then?* remains unanswered. It recalls to me a familiar elegiac composition by a fourth-form boy on the theme "*Femina dux facti*." This couplet, it will be remembered, took the form of the following dialogue:—

"Femina dux facti." "Facti dux femina?"
"Quid tum?"
"Quid tum? Tum facti femina dux fuit."
"O!"

The curtain-raiser, *Before Breakfast*, by the author of *Rutherford & Son*, was a most attractive trifle. Here we have a cadet of good family who has adopted Socialistic views, professedly on their abstract merits, but actually to provide argument in support of his intended marriage with a chorus-girl. But when he finds that he has been deceived about her origin, that she is, in point of fact, sister to his mother's own kitchenmaid, his emancipated theories are proved inadequate to meet the new conditions. The scene is freshly laid in the library of a house at an hour when the family is not yet down and the servants are in occupation, the butler (nicely played by Mr. HARWOOD) being engaged in reading a report in his "special" of his young master's projected *mésalliance*. Mr. LAWRENCE



HER FIRST TELEPHONE.

Jenny ... Miss VERA COBURN.

ANDERSON was not quite equal to the prodigal's part, but Miss VERA COBURN gave a most astonishingly good character-sketch as *Jinny* the kitchenmaid.

O. S.

MR. VADE MECUM ABROAD.

I MET Mr. Vade Mecum in Italy. His intention was of the kindest: to help me over stiles; but he was less useful than entertaining. I wanted to admire him, as we always wish to be admired by those whom we instruct; but he made it difficult. One keeps one's admiration for the self-possessed capable persons, and here was V. M. blundering at the very start. No sooner did we arrive at the station and perilously descend to the far-away Italian platform than I found him saying to the porter—in faultless Italian, I admit, although possibly a shade too grammatical—"I have left my bag in the train," followed by the question, "Where is the Lost-Property Office?" This came as the greater shock because on the steamer across he had been enquiring, "*Dove tengono le cinture di salvataggio?*" and I had honoured him for his forethought.

That he could be impulsive I gathered from the things he said at the bicycle-mender's, where I met him a few days afterwards. How he came to have such an accident I never learned, but some idea of the completeness of his smash may be gathered from the tale of damage that he told. Thus: "The brake does not act. The frame is twisted. The back wheel is buckled. The handle has come off. The fork is snapped. The lamp will not burn. I have lost the pump and the spanners." It seemed to me a mistake in tact on the part of a Mentor to let one have such a glimpse of the disastrous side of his life.

On our way from the station I gathered that he is not a generous man from the fact that his genial remark to the cabman, "Hurry up! I will give you a good tip," was followed instantly by, "Take me to the nearest doctor," which seemed to indicate a fearful and sudden spasm brought about by the promise of unwonted munificence; but it was at the jeweller's that he came out in the least handsome light. "I wish," he said (always in best Italian), "to choose an emerald brooch for my wife." That was promising and affectionate, I thought, except that perhaps it did not point quite to the latest fashion in jewels; and incidentally it suggested that Mrs. Vade Mecum was not exactly artistic. But V. M. went on to spoil everything. "Tell me," he added, "the lowest price." Ah, V. M. (thought I), not thus did



"OH, MA'AM, MA'AM. I'VE SWALLOWED A SAFETY-PIN."
"SO THAT'S WHERE MY SAFETY-PINS GO, IS IT?"

you address the jeweller in the days of your courtship! Worse was to follow. "I want," he went on, "to purchase a few charms"; and here again I began by thinking well of his good nature. He evidently had some daughters or nieces to whom he wished, very properly, to take a souvenir of his pleasant Italian journeys. But imagine my pain when he added the deadly words, "*Qualche cosa a buon mercato che sia d' effetto*" (Something cheap but showy).

That was too much. At that point I threw away this conversation book and bought another.

The Gentle Art.

"The Conservatives have nothing but a flood of words. That is why the country refuses to rise to their baits and bribes."—*Daily Chronicle*. One can hardly blame these fish for refusing to bite at a flood.

The passage quoted, in our last issue, from an account of the Kent Collieries Company, and headed "Commercial Acumen, or, the Secret of Successful Coal-Mining," should have been ascribed to an advertisement in "*The Times*" Financial Supplement, and not to the Supplement itself.

BONES OF CONTENTION.

No. III.

THERE are occasions when my wife sees fit to play at a terrible game—a game which, it is true, seems to afford her considerable inward satisfaction, but to me brings only a sense of haunting disquiet and invariably throws me into a cold perspiration. It is the game of horrors, and begins with the ill-omened word “supposing.” Usually my wife’s indulgence in this recreation is inspired by the contemplation of a problem play, but on the last occasion it was after witnessing one of Mr. PÉLISSIER’S spritely ebullitions that her mood merged into that shade of contemplative melancholy which always promises the game of horrors. There is, I suppose, some subtle thread which inextricably unites the frivolous and the gruesome. I must ask a psychologist about this.

Innocently I sat sipping my mild whiskey-and-soda before retiring to rest.

“Supposing,” said my wife suddenly, “that I was run over by a taxi and terribly disfigured.”

“Why?” I asked mildly.

“Well, I want to know what you would do.”

“I should be dreadfully upset,” I suggested after a moment’s consideration.

My wife tapped her foot impatiently. “What else?” she demanded.

“I should try to get damages out of the company,” said I, with a flash of inspiration.

“And what of me?” demanded my wife tragically, “with my scarred, distorted face? You couldn’t possibly care for me any more.”

“Of course I should.” Practise this as I may and honestly as I mean it, I simply cannot say the words with the smallest trace of sincerity or conviction.

“Or suppose,” mused my wife, “that I just had my nose crushed and was obliged to have it amputated.”

“Sing a song o’ sixpence,” said I with forced, but relevant, jocularity.

“Could you care for anyone without a nose?” she insisted.

“I have never tried.”

“I know you couldn’t,” she returned with bitter conviction, “not even in the dark.”

“If it was you I shouldn’t mind—that is—at least—oh, you know, dear.” The cold perspiration began to set in as, in response to a frantic summons to my dignity, I grew conscious that my voice and countenance were merely becoming permeated with an expression of sheepish apology.

“And then supposing,” continued

my wife more cheerfully, “that I sustained terrible internal injuries and had to lie on my back all day. How would you like being burdened with me?”

I finished my whiskey-and-soda at a gulp. “I don’t like this game at all,” I said.

“The refuge of one who dare not make a truthful answer. But you are right; it would be far, far better for me to be in my grave and you free to marry someone else. Do you think you would choose a fair or a dark one next time?”

“Piebald,” said I.

“I had hardly thought,” returned my wife with dignity, “that my sudden death was a fit subject for jest.”

“It isn’t a fit subject for conversation,” I objected.

“Of course you *would* marry again?” she urged almost coaxingly.

“You can’t imagine that after my first lamentable experience—” I began with elaborate facetiousness.

My wife checked me with a glance.

“Can you never be serious? Would you tell her about me?” she proceeded. “She’d be sure to want to know which you liked best.”

“I never gratify idle curiosity,” said I.

“So you would, then?”

“What would?”

“You would marry again?”

“I never said so.”

“You said that you wouldn’t gratify her idle curiosity.”

“Well, nor I would.” The cold perspiration took complete possession.

“There you are again.”

“Well, I mean if I did I wouldn’t,” said I with painful lucidity.

“So you think you would?” insisted my wife.

“I’m perfectly certain I should not.” Bemused as I was, I felt this to be a brilliant effort and wondered vaguely why I had not thought of it before.

“Oh, you just say that to satisfy me,” accused my wife.

It was the most astoundingly true observation that she has ever made in her life, and it fairly shook my mental balance. For a moment I was speechless as I watched the wounded disapproval of her countenance. Then: “I don’t understand the rules,” I pleaded, “and surely it is my turn to do the supposing.”

“Oh, very well,” she agreed unwillingly.

“Supposing, then,” I launched out desperately, “that I had been having a little flutter in the oil market. Supposing that catastrophe upon catastrophe had met my honest endeavours to promote our financial welfare; that, in fact, the relentless gushers had swept away the larger portion of our little capital—”

“But, Harold,” interrupted my wife, “you would never—”

I did not look at her, but continued my theme with a somewhat remarkable flow of eloquence:—

“Supposing that, for your sake, I had risked much because I longed to see you in the gowns from Paris or Dover Street that you would grace so transcendently. Supposing that instead it meant reach-me-downs from the Tottenham Court Road, hats that you trimmed yourself. Supposing,” I continued graphically, “that we were obliged to knock off cream for tea, to descend to bloaters for dinner, to dismiss the cook and promote the twenie at a reduced salary. Supposing—”

But at this point I was stopped and allowed to proceed no further. My wife stood facing me, her burning eyes gazing into mine.

“So *that* was your pressing business in the City,” she said in a vibrating voice. “Oh, Harold, you a gambler—and a ruined one!”

“You aren’t playing properly,” I objected. “I’m certain you oughtn’t to have said that, especially if I did it all for your sake.”

She turned away. “I think you have broken my heart,” she said.

“Wrong again,” said I, and then suddenly I saw that her face was wet.

It took the best part of an hour to undo the mischief I had done, to convince my wife that our capital, still unimpaired, lay snugly reposing in the cotton-wool of Liverpool Corps. and Canterbury three per cents. I had, she assured me, taken ten years off her life, and when at last she went to bed she left me feeling like a remorseful elephant who, in a fit of skittishness, has crushed a bird of Paradise beneath his heavy foot. Her last words completed my mental collapse.

“If people who have no imagination,” she said decisively, “would only recognize their limitations, much unhappiness would be spared to those who are obliged to associate with them.”

I rose with a sigh and helped myself to another whiskey-and-soda—a strong one this time.

* * * * *

Now, supposing that my wife had been me, and supposing that I had invented the game of horrors, can one suppose that I should have ever supposed that she would suppose—
Oh, hang it!

Phrases we Should Like to See Illustrated.

“Their aspirations are summed up in a dare-devil way of seizing the English tongue by the throat and bidding it stand up and deliver.”

English Review.



Mistress. "WHY, JOHN, WHAT'S THE MATTER?"

John. "I CAN'T STAND IT NO LONGER, MUM! NO SOONER DOES I GET STARTED ON A JOB THAN MASTER COMES 'ITTING THEM LITTLE BALLS ABOUT. 'PROACHIN' HE CALLS IT. I ALLERS GETS BE'IND BUSHES OR SQMETHINK, BUT THEY COMES THROUGH AND 'URTS SOMETHINK BITTER!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

ONE way of being optimistic, of course, is to refuse to look at the ugly facts of life and so to arrive at the belief that they do not exist—a method which is perhaps more practicable when applied to affairs other than one's own. Maiden ladies of lordly lineage and old-time sweetness may live by a road as destitute and disreputable as Hog Lane and yet remain convinced that the world is happily and entirely free of such evils as destitution and disrepute. They need only keep down the blinds of those windows which look out upon the Lane and they are left with the view of their own garden and with no knowledge of any less peaceful and proper existence on the other side of the house. This the *Misses Manleverer* did, and Mr. HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL has caught them doing it. Furthermore he has discovered the whole town of Charminster in gentle conspiracy to maintain the ladies in their illusion by keeping sedulously from their eyes and ears all incidents, local or world-wide, which might prove upsetting to their comfortable beliefs. But Mr. VACHELL insists upon the facts being faced, and ultimately Shame, not to be confined to Hog Lane, appears in the garden. Nor is it left there, for, when all the blinds are pulled down, it comes into the very house itself and must at last be beheld. One error of taste or sign of excess would have ruined this dainty story; mawkish sentimentality might well have resulted. With pleasure, therefore, I hereby certify that I have examined *Blinds Down* (SMITH, ELDER) and found it in every way sound and worthy of consideration.

I daresay you will be astonished to find that Mr. P. G. WODEHOUSE is the latest exploiter of the imaginary kingdom, in a story that he has called *The Prince and Betty* (MILLS AND BOON). Somehow, though I don't know exactly why, I had not expected this of Mr. WODEHOUSE. But because he is an author with a reputation, highly deserved, for whimsicality it was a relief to find that the trappings of Ruritania are worn by him with a certain difference. Though *Prince John*, the central figure, was a young man of a type not unusual in fictional royalty, the real power behind the tinsel throne of Mervo was Mr. Scobel, the multi-millionaire financier, who was running the kingdom as an attractive setting to his casino, and wanted *John's* help as combined figure-head and advertisement. It was with this idea that Mr. Scobel had turned out the republic, and arranged a picturesque restoration for the rightful heir, a Cambridge undergraduate who had been brought up in ignorance of his own identity. So *John* came to Mervo, and met *Betty*, and the story resulted. It is quite an entertaining story of its improbable kind, and Mr. WODEHOUSE makes his puppets dance, in sprightly fashion enough, through a series of amusing adventures till they reach the inevitable pairing off in the last chapter. I cannot add that any one of them has more than a superficial resemblance to humanity; but after all, in an affair of this sort, that is no great matter; the author's invention is the important point, and that is here as fertile and jovial as ever, notably in his description of the new model casino, which you must read and enjoy for yourself.

Huntley Trotman, a nice person, met *Joletta Lane*, equally

nice, in the first chapter of Mr. ALGERNON GISSING's *The Top Farm* (WHITE) when he, *Huntley*, was fifteen and she but two years younger; in the twenty-seventh they marry. To *Huntley* this marriage was an experiment, quite likely, one judges, to be successful; to *Joletta*, it was a sort of habit she had fallen into. Why precisely she married, first, an unsatisfactory horse-doctor, and, second, a still more unsatisfactory farmer who was violently in love with somebody else, Mr. GISSING tries to explain with that easy skill which he commands. But he didn't convince me of the plausibility of the various separations and mystifications. And I consider it was his business to do so, and not to be content with entertaining me as he did. True to the authentic modern method he has spent the most of his pains on the unpleasant folk of his little country stage. *Prisca Cambray*, governess, who has two beaux to her string, marries the uncle (unloved) who has the money, rather than the nephew (loved, or so he says) who only expects and loses it. She is of the kind that turns strong men weak even to the point of folly, caddishness or crime as occasion dictates. Naturally you have to take her surpassing beauty for granted. You get only her callous vanity, her temper, her tricks. Nemesis comes at the violent hands of her discarded lover. Both characters are well conceived and deftly drawn. . . . I fell to wondering why Mr. GISSING has adopted the irritating habit of writing "the man" when he simply means "he"; and why, so old a craftsman, he retains the services of the utterly discredited "and which." But his small beer is well brewed and has a nice head on it.



Taxi-Driver (to fare who has just paid the exact amount registered, and expressed his regret at having no coppers). "OW, NO COPTERS! WOT AEAHT ALL THEM MEDALS!"

It is feasible, of course, to make a thoroughly absorbing novel out of the plain narrative of an uneventful life (what would Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT say if I were to deny it?), but it needs extraordinary cunning, a method of intricate detail, and perhaps a more than usually attractive hero or heroine. In *The Family Living* (MURRAY) Mr. E. H. LACON WATSON has very doggedly set about the task of describing within the ordinary limits of a book of romance a second-rate character who does nothing in particular, and cannot even perhaps be said, like the Elizabethan House of Lords, to do it very well. *Algernon Ridley*, suffering from birth (in the abbreviated form of his Christian name) under one of the cruellest handicaps that can befall a young man, is brought up in the expectation of succeeding to his father's cure of souls at Gosport, and to that cure, after various ineffectual revolts, he does eventually succeed. The author has sketched his boyhood, his mediocre career at Cambridge, his love-affairs, ending in his re-engagement to the girl for whom he never apparently felt more than a mild affection, and his excursions into pedagogy and business. I am sorry about *Algernon*, but I am forced to confess that his incur-

able middlingness, if I may use that word, extended itself to the interest I felt in him and the story of his life. If I am ever at Gosport on a Sunday I shall go to hear him preach, but I cannot promise to stay awake during the whole of his sermon.

Nora le Geyt, the central character of ALICE M. DIEHL'S latest novel, *Their Wedded Wife* (STANLEY PAUL), appears to have been cursed with a strangely uncertain memory. It is a defect that I have noticed before in heroines of a certain type. Thus, when *Colonel Selwyn* met her as his aunt's companion at Nice and asked her to marry him, she never seems to have thought of explaining that what she describes as a previous infatuation for a man who disappeared had really been an actual marriage, followed by a month of wedded bliss. So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells, and merrily passed the time, till,

as I foresaw, husband number one turned up again. Then a lot of unpleasantness resulted. "Wretch!" he hissed, advancing towards her—that was *Paul's* contribution, when they met in the drawing-room alone before dinner. But *Nora* simply shattered his record by hissing a long and complicated paragraph, without a single sibilant; moreover she "gasped as she hissed out the words, wringing her hands in mortal anguish of soul." After this, I lost all interest in the competition, merely pausing to acknowledge a very creditable attempt on the part of *Colonel Selwyn*. "Sir," he hissed, "for less than what you have said I would have called you out." On the whole, however, the prize undoubtedly belonged to

Nora, who seems to have felt the inferiority of her husbands, as she soon afterwards left them both and went on to the stage. I should have suggested the music-halls myself, but I suppose she knew best. Anyway, I agree that her natural gifts were wasted in private life.

I am quite unable to decide whether *Daphne in the Fatherland* (MELROSE) is really, as it pretends to be, the work of an ingenuous anonymous and rather attractive English girl who recently spent some time in Germany, or only a carefully disguised imitation. There are plenty of intimate personal sketches of Germans, from the Emperor downwards, who might be recognised by themselves and their friends, but nothing very scandalous; so there is no particular reason why it should not be all true, or, for the matter of that, all fiction. In either case I cannot understand why the publisher's reader did not disentangle some of *Daphne's* sentences from the maze resulting from a paucity of punctuation marks. The book is quite entertaining, but not quite entertaining enough to justify the second reading which this peculiarity of style frequently entails.